







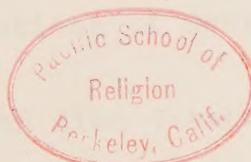


T H E S E S

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PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION



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C O N T E N T S

FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

The Religious Values of Galsworthy's Dramas

Ronald J. Menmuir

Unifying the Sunday Morning Program: A Survey and  
Evaluation of Plans now in Use

Ray S. Miller

The Triumph of Decadence

Nicias Peter Reckas

Religion in the Integration of Personality

Margaretha Anna Stach

The Social Implications of George Fox's Religion  
and Ethics

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The Life and Teachings of Clement of Alexandria

Henry Ward Wiley



THE RELIGIOUS VALUES  
OF  
GALSWORTHY'S DRAMAS

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THESIS

submitted to the Department of  
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as Philosopher and Dramatist
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CHAPTER ONE

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DRAMA AND RELIGION



## CHAPTER ONE

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### DRAMA AND RELIGION

Drama in history  
Struggle as the essence of drama and  
religion  
Modern culture stultifying to  
imagination  
Church neglecting technique of drama  
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## CHAPTER ONE

### DRAMA AND RELIGION

Drama in one form or another is as old as the imagination of man. The Greeks developed it to a remarkable degree as a religious and educational technique. For six days, half of the population of Athens, some 20,000 people, would sit in an open-air theatre and watch twenty to thirty dramas. And this practice was continued for nearly five hundred years. When the priests of the middle ages wanted to tell the gospel story to the people they chose to dramatize it. They began with pantomime in the churches, and miracle and mystery plays soon followed. They built stages outside the church, and put them on wheels to haul them from village to village. Shakespeare put into the mouth of Hamlet the well known words,

".....The play's the thing  
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King."

And that is precisely what drama does; it catches the conscience.

It is little wonder then that we today are turning more and more to drama. "For the essence of drama is struggle". And there is intense and serious struggle in life today. Again the class struggle is a real issue. The struggle to escape the inadequate ethics of a decadent philosophy and to find a higher and truer moral is vital. There is, too, a revival of religion in its efforts to right the wrongs of the world. It is beginning to call again for the courage that it takes to set at the heart of life - a cross. And it



is right that religion do this. For the deepest struggles of our lives are religious; and it is the business of religion to aid men in these struggles to find an adequate power, and hence an adequate solution of the issues of life.

Do we need to remind ourselves of the stultifying influence that our present culture has had upon the imaginative and creative impulses? There have been two major factors operating on our imaginative life. The first is the mechanization of life with the consequent depersonalization. The other factor is the moving picture industry. The first very definitely intensified the need for some aesthetic expression to counteract its own tendency to make life metallic. The latter was the fad of the hour. It was an industry that was part of this mechanization and made it possible to entertain large masses of people with the minimum of effort on the part of those masses. That the content of the plays was a gross misrepresentation of life's highest values and hence a degrading and debilitating influence was no concern of either the owners or the patrons of the industry. All that the patrons were conscious of was that it provided a highly intensified and imaginative experience related to life's primitive urges and impulses. They attached it to life as a safety valve. It was an outlet, ready at hand, for the imaginative and the love of the dramatic. But today we are needing something more than an indiscriminate outlet. We need something to give us a new vitality, not to suffer, but to conquer, to change, to actually create something new. In discussing this problem Dean Inge said,



"When this new prophet comes, I am disposed to think that he will choose to speak to his generation neither from the pulpit nor from the platform, nor from the printed page, but from the stage. A great dramatist might help us find our souls."

We need exactly that: - to find our souls.

The writer is convinced that the church of the present day has neglected the powerful implement so forcefully demonstrated to us by the movie industry. The best of sermons are being preached to empty pews, unless perchance the preacher has found some other means of attracting men. We might as well face the truth. The people we must reach with our message have little interest in the traditional sermon. And those who do come and listen are often times untouched, unreached. Their minds may be stimulated, entertained, or antagonized, but the conscience and the will are seldom reached. And if we fail to reach both the conscience and the will, in addition to informing and persuading the intellect, we have failed to minister to the world of men at the place of its deepest need. We must develop the value and technique of drama in this field.

But what connection has all this with Galsworthy and his dramas? Fred Eastman has said, "A religious drama is one which has a religious effect upon the audience. That is, it sends the audience away exalted in spirit, deepened in the sense of fellowship with God and man, and enriched in its understanding of the spiritual struggles in men's souls."<sup>1</sup> It is the purpose of this paper to consider the

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1 "Modern Religious Dramas", (Introduction)



plays of Galsworthy in the light of this definition, and more especially the first part of the definition. For it is not always that the effect of religion is the exaltation of spirit and the sense of deepened fellowship with God. Ultimately of course it does involve and produce all that the definition includes. But there are times when, rather than exalt, it humbles and makes ashamed. There are times when the sense of guilt must be quickened and that is not always immediately accompanied by a sense of deepened fellowship with God. A religious play is not one that necessarily deals with the content of the Bible or with the tradition of our religion. It is one which deals with the struggles of men in whatever field, for religion is a kind of life. If we feel that religion is not receiving its rightful recognition today it is largely because it is not measuring up to its rightful tasks and its essential function. Its function is to keep clearly before men the real issues of life, and to aid them in their struggles involved in the adequate resolution of those issues.

The plays of Galsworthy deal with the real issues of the life of man. They grip the imagination and the conscience. They leave one with an increased sense of fellowship with his fellow-man. And certainly they leave one with a deeper understanding of the spiritual struggles in men's souls. It is on this basis that the writer offers the humble opinion that the works of John Galsworthy are of extreme religious value. That it was the religious motive that prompted the works is neither denied nor defended. We are concerned here



primarily with their effects. But while our prime interest is in effects, it will be necessary for us to give attention to the philosophy of the mind that could produce such effects. Ultimately causes or motives cannot be divorced from either the means, or the ends which they produce. That there is this inner unity in the plays of Galsworthy can hardly be disputed. To discover and evaluate the quality in this unity is our task.



## CHAPTER TWO

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### CHARACTERISTICS of GALSWORTHY AS PHILOSOPHER AND DRAMATIST

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### CHARACTERISTICS of GALSWORTHY AS PHILOSOPHER AND DRAMATIST

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## CHAPTER TWO

### CHARACTERISTICS of GALSWORTHY AS PHILOSOPHER AND DRAMATIST

#### I

Born with a silver spoon in his mouth, Galsworthy knew the people of whom he wrote. His father was of a long line of farmers living in South Devon on the edge of the sea. His mother belonged to a family of long standing in Worcestershire. His father migrated to London and became a lawyer, and director of many companies, and amassed a fortune. He did not marry until middle life and then settled in Coombe, Surrey. He was fifty years old when John was born. John was sent to Harrow and later to Oxford where he took honors in law, intending to follow in that profession. He was admitted to the bar, but almost immediately left to travel. In his wide contacts with many civilizations he came to question the whole English social order as represented in law and convention, both of which were very familiar to him. His criticisms have become our heritage of novel and play, a heritage for which our generation must ever be grateful. His works are priceless gems. In character study they are supreme. Their realism is gripping and disturbing. Their power to arouse the sympathy and educate the understanding of a man for his fellows is irresistible. Coats says that in his naturalism he shares with Ibsen; in his moral earn-



estness he is akin to Shaw; and in his preoccupation with the sores and diseases of society he ranks with Brieux. But there are characteristics and qualities that are peculiar to Galsworthy himself. Such characteristics are essentially at the heart of his whole philosophy of drama and expression.

## II

The first and perhaps the most vital element in his philosophy, and embodied as a real characteristic in his work is sincerity. He says that there are three courses open to the dramatist. The first of these is to set very definitely before the public just what it wants set before it: to confirm its accepted traditions, beliefs, and customs. This way, he comments, is "the most common, successful, and popular." The second course is to give the public those views of life that are essentially the author's own. This seems to be neither popular nor successful. The third method is "To set before the public no cut-and-dried codes, but the phenomena of life and character, selected and combined, but not distorted, by the dramatist's outlook, set down without fear, favour, or prejudice, leaving the public to draw such poor moral as nature may afford. This third method requires a certain detachment; it requires a sympathy with, a love of, and a curiosity as to, things for their own sake; it requires a far view, together with patient industry, for no immediately practical result."<sup>2</sup> And he has held to his own standard with complete fidelity. No one

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2 "Platitudes Concerning Drama" in Inn of Tranquility



could ever successfully accuse Galsworthy of misrepresenting a situation. If he is ever didactic it is never at the expense of his characters. He sees life steadily and whole and presents it as he sees it. In the same essay he goes on to say "To the making of good drama ... there must be brought an almost passionate love of discipline, a white heat of self respect, a desire to make the truest, fairest, best thing in one's power; and that to these must be added an eye that does not flinch. Such qualities alone will bring to a drama the selfless character which soaks it with inevitability."<sup>3</sup> It is this character of inevitability that grips one as he reads Galsworthy. It is this that lifts his work out of time into the timeless. Who can read **THE FUGITIVE** and not feel that irresistibleness of the inevitable from the first scene? Or take the other extreme and read **A BIT O' LOVE**, and the same feeling grips one. Everything belongs, and belongs just where it is. And that inevitableness carries to the end. While the reader never knows what is going to happen next, and there is maintained a vivid suspense, yet somehow the end is inevitable. The fugitive had to die; there was no way out for Clare, just because she was Clare - and everything else was what it was. But Strangway had to live. He had to win. And for exactly the same reason that Clare had to die.

Galsworthy further discusses this matter of sincerity with reference to the recent development in drama. He

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid* 2

<sup>4</sup> In "Anglo-American Drama and Its Future" in Another Sheaf



points out that this growth is due to an outcrop of sincerity. It is not a growth in quantity because there is nothing like sincerity for closing the doors of the theatre. It excludes all care for private gain or the reaction of the public. It includes nothing because it pays or creates sensation. It fakes nothing, falsifies nothing, and has no "fireworks". If it is not accepted by the public it is largely because of the dramatists themselves. The burden is on their own shoulders for not producing regardless of public want, results, or rewards. "Art exists not to confirm people in their tastes and prejudices, not to show them what they have seen before, but to present them with a new vision of life." But that the great public does not want sincerity, Galsworthy attributes to the fact that it is too disturbing. Most people do not wish to be disturbed. They wish to be amused and confirmed in their prejudices and fashions. But the Actor-Managers are against this new drama for a very different reason. Galsworthy says they are "set on such insincere distortions of values as are necessary to a constant succession of big parts for themselves". And while sincerity does not exclude heroic characters it does exclude the mock heroics so common to modern drama. It is a matter of character study rather than heroics. And for this the dramatist must have a capacity to see and feel with much fervour, and be prepared to pursue it to the end, without fake and without compromise, without paring down or without bolstering up. It is the business of the artist to portray. The portrayal must be of life as it truly is, free from prejudice, tradition, authority, or custom.



We cannot leave this consideration of sincerity without some comment on Galsworthy's remarks concerning such things as plot and dialogue. Concerning the plot he says, "A good plot is that sure edifice which slowly rises out of the interplay of circumstance on temperament, and temperament on circumstance, within the enclosing atmosphere of an idea.<sup>6</sup> A human being is the best plot there is." In other words a plot is not what it is so often represented as being, that is, a complicated set of happenings. It is rather an unfolding, cumulating, psychological tension. It is always something happening to individuals. But those individuals are preserved in their integrity within that atmosphere and idea. They must never become the servants of the idea. The plot must always be hung on the characters and not the characters on the plot. They must be permitted to live their own lives in their own way. It is only thus that they can surmount time.

This of course essentially involves the dialogue. Dialogue denies all license. The character must not be made to say what the dramatist would like him to say. As Galsworthy says, when his creations speak as they should not speak, they bring misery to his heart; ashes to his mouth when they say things for the sake of saying them; disgust when they are "smart". Dialogue must rely for its fun and pathos "on the fun and tears of life". The soul of good expression, never-the-less is unexpectedness, which still keeps to the



mark of meaning, and does not betray the truth. "Expression whether of laws, psychology, episode, or feeling, should be humane and refrain from torturing the wits of mankind."<sup>7</sup>

On the same principle "All over-expression whether by journalists, poets, novelists, or clergymen, is bad for language, bad for the mind."<sup>8</sup> By over expression he meant the use of words beyond that which the feeling of writer or speaker or the event will carry. He supposes some victorian scribe writing - "Stretching herself with feline grace, and emitting those sounds immemorially connected with satisfaction, Grimalkin lay on a rug whose richly variegated pattern spoke eloquently of the Orient and all the wonders of the Arabian Nights."<sup>9</sup> In other words - "The cat lay on the mat."

### III

Of hardly less significance is his demand for sympathy, and the degree to which he demonstrates it on his own part, and produces it in the heart of the audience. Who can read his works and not be utterly convinced of his profound sympathy and understanding. There are two great monsters of human life and society at which he is always striking, -- stupidity and inhumanity. And eternally there is the plea for understanding. This is brought to the surface with a strong persuasive power in THE PIGEON. Wellwyn's "weakness" is understanding and sympathy. He has befriended among others a man named Ferrand who seems to have no particular

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7 From "On Expression" in Castles in Spain.

8 Ibid

9 Ibid



ambition but to rove. Sir Thomas and Professor Galway spend long hours arguing over their respective theories as to what is to be done with such men as Ferrand. Near the end of the play Ferrand in conversation with Wellwyn says, "Since I saw you Monsieur I have been in three institutions. They are palaces.....One little thing they lack - those palaces. It is understanding of the human heart. In them tame birds pluck wild birds naked.....When we are with you we feel something - here (touches his heart). If I had one prayer to make, it would be, 'Good God, give me to understand'... Without that Monsieur all is dry as a parched skin of orange."

And Galsworthy so faithfully presents his characters that the sympathy of the audience is not directed to one individual, or to one group. There are four types of drama. The first is classical in which the hero of the play is pitched against what might be called fate. The villain is a god or some power super-human. The sympathy in this type is of course for the hero. The second type is that of romantic drama where the hero is pitched against the villain, and of course the sympathy is almost invariably for the hero. Then there is the psychological drama of the divided self. And lastly there is the social drama where class is set against class. Here ordinarily the sympathies are preponderantly in favour of one class. Galsworthy uses the fourth type of drama mostly, though quite frequently the psychological type is also used. But the struggle is always limited to humans, and seldom, if ever, are the sympathies all with



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one individual or class. In the social dramas the individual is never a hero in his own right but is rather representative of his class. Furthermore there is no villian on the stage. The suffering and misery of modern social life is not the result of "devils", but is caused by people of good intention and integrity, and having excellent qualities. They are not people one can really dislike. But they are shortsighted, obtuse, egoistic, and unimaginative. Yet they are so like ourselves that we almost unconsciously make excuse for them while perhaps not wholly excusing them. The result of the tragedy which emerges is far more real than ever classical or romantic tragedy could possibly be.

The social tragedy of Galsworthy deals rather with victims than heroes or villians. He brings out the impotence of the individual. Whether he is good or bad, right or wrong, (he is generally a mixture of both), he is up against the law, the mob, a capitalistic society, tradition and custom. They demand conformity, and if it is not forthcoming, they smother and crush. Here Galsworthy is strong in setting forth a certain desperate futility, frantic flight, pathetic resignation. But even here there is a light in the darkness, with few exceptions. There is generally spiritual victory and emergence. In his preface to the Manaton edition of his plays, Galsworthy says, "I resent the contention that my 'puppets' are always beaten in their struggle with society. Falder is beaten; Clare is beaten; but in most of my plays they are spiritually emergent if not materially triumphant." And this is true. Even in the case of Clare,



though she ultimately ends it all by her own hand, somehow even that seems better than the two other alternatives that were open to her. To return to her husband while there was yet the opportunity was worse than death. To sell her body merely to keep it alive was little better. It was not the death of a coward. She would have been a coward not to go on in the only path open to her.

#### IV

Inherent in all this sincerity and sympathy, there is impartiality. It is the mental corollary of sympathy. In Another Sheaf the author writes "Let me try to eliminate any bias and see the whole thing as an umpire should..... Let me have no temperament for the time being.....Only from an impersonal point of view, if there be such a thing, am I going to get even approximately the truth." The difficulty with this is that it presents a play that at first impresses one with what appears to be inconclusiveness. But that is only because we are not accustomed to that type of writing. Our dramas of the popular stage are solved for us. The hero is clearly in the right and the villain in the wrong, and we are quite sure, because of previous experience, that at the end of the play the villain will be defeated, the hero marry and live happily ever after. But the trouble with all that is that the solution is not in the situation, nor is the situation real. That which is preponderant in modern popular drama is a myth. The tragedy of it all is that it is hypnotic and blinds us to the real issues. It ignores



them. It is carried on in a world of make-believe. Galsworthy on the other hand in his sincerity is essentially realistic. If we are in doubt about the answer to the problem we cannot, if we boast of even normal intelligence, be in doubt about the issue. Nor does Galsworthy leave us without a solution, and a conclusion. The answer lies in the situation itself. The only trouble is that we are not accustomed to thinking for ourselves. The solution is in the correction or elimination of an economic system, or a social system. Or perhaps it lies in the discarding of an outgrown ethic, or the scrapping of a soul-suffocating tradition. But it is there. Nevertheless, that the first reaction is one of indecision acclaims the achievement of impartiality by the author. It heralds an adherence to truth that is refreshing and inspiring.

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Coats discussing this inconclusiveness says "if something is to be said for everything, then no special importance is to be attached to anything. There is no finality, no clear solution." But is that so? Is not the conclusion false? Just because there is something to be said for everything does not imply that that something in each case be given, or could even claim, equal significance. Just because there is something to be said for Capital and also something to be said for Labor in STRIFE for instance, the conclusion to be reached, which is inherent within the situation itself, is not that no special significance be attached to anything, but that much significance be attached to everything.



Consideration of sympathy and impartiality as correlative characteristics in the author and his works, leads us to an equally important combination of effects upon the audience. This is the combination of pity and indignation. Galsworthy's whole work is an indictment of the entire fabric of modern civilization and human stupidity, and an appeal for understanding and sympathy. But the arousing of this reaction within us takes, by the definite intention of the author, a peculiar turn. He is out for more than sympathy and understanding. "He goes straight for the conscience and leaves it horribly raw and wounded. Instead of laughing we feel inclined to weep. The worst of it is that.... . . Galsworthy puts no villain on the stage on whom we can vent our spleen. The villain we find is in the audience itself, and especially in the seat where we happen to be sitting."<sup>11</sup> One finds it extremely embarrassing and uncomfortable to discover that he is permitting if not supporting and defending the system or the tradition or the ethic which he has observed with his own eyes devour flesh and blood and drive to desperation the spirits of men. And there is nothing to ease our conscience. The end of the play does not bring relief to the victim. How could it and remain true? And what hurts is that we know it is so, and not only with that one victim but thousands of others of whom we would rather not think.



Nor does the irony that is inherent in our world's present culture and so masterfully portrayed by Galsworthy, make the smart of our conscience any easier. There is a thwarting and a frustration rising out of human folly and fallibility. In THE PIGEON the professional reformers lack humanity, while the genial humanists lack organization and system, and both thus unite to defeat their common end. The law is devised with all its elaborate machinery for justice, and the product turns out to be injustice. Capital and Labor clash as in STRIFE. There ensues a strike, a fight, and the end is compromise on grounds practically equivalent to those where they began. And then someone ironically remarks "That's where the fun comes in." And thus Ferrand remarks, when Mrs. Megan has been arrested for attempted suicide and Wellwyn is disturbed about it, "Do not grieve Monsieur, this will give her courage. There is nothing gives more courage than to see the irony of things."

But is there no cure for such irony that rises out of human fallibility and folly? There is a cure and as often happens in Galsworthy, it is found in an unexpected place. Lemmy in FOUNDATIONS is being interviewed by the Press regarding the conditions of the times and Lemmy's views in particular.

Lemmy: I will styke my reputytion on somethin', you tyke it dahn word for word. This country's goin' to the dawgs - now 'ere's the sensytion - unless we gets a new religion.

Press: Ah! Now for it - yes?

Lemmy: In one word - "Kindness".

But forcibly as it is here put in a few words, how much more



so is it impressed upon the consciousness as the unuttered solution to most of human misery. It is the inevitable, inescapable conclusion of all Galsworthy's tragedies: if humans would only be human! For instance who can read the SKIN GAME and not be moved to exclaim - "If only men and women would be human!"

## VII

It is this strange intangible thing within the drama that Galsworthy describes as flavor. He says it is that "spirit of the dramatist projected into his work in a state of volatility, so that no one can exactly lay hands on it, <sup>12</sup> here, there, or anywhere." It cannot be created by intention or by effort. It is the essential spirit of the dramatist himself, which inexplicably but inevitably permeates all he touches. It will vary in quantity according to his mood and temperament, but never alters in its essential quality. It is that which makes a writer's work something more than a work. His writing ceases to be something external, beyond, other than; it becomes one with the being of the man himself.

But if Galsworthy places sincerity first in his work, it is not at the expense of artistry. Nor is it at the expense of meaning or moral. He says, and is true to his own maxim, "Drama must be shaped so as to have a spire of meaning. Every grouping of life and character has its inherent moral; and the business of the dramatist is so to pose the

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12 "Platitudes Concerning Drama", in Inn of Tranquility



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group as to bring that moral poignantly to the light of day". And how magnificently he achieves this grouping. It is done without moralizing. It is achieved without imposing on the situation. His moral is always inherent, and it is because it is so that it carries the quality of the inevitable - the inescapable. This is the supreme accomplishment of the dramatist and his drama. It is different from the pulpit inasmuch as the moral is not argued. It is not preached - it is played. As Coats figuratively suggests, the temple of arts has within it an altar.

## VIII

Realism! Serious, sombre, at times horrible. But a realism clothed with feeling, imagination, sympathy, and understanding. A realism that is not a cynicism. Rather one that does not lose sight of what nobility there is: that is not fatalistic but that finds always within the horror of it all the inherent moral for its own cure. A naturalistic rather than a lyrical technique; one in which the feelings of the players are not torn to shreds and, mingled with blood and hair and flesh, splattered all over the fixtures for the delighted orgiastic gaze of psychic cannibals. Rather here is a technique which devoutly respects the integrity of the characters, and leaves the audience with that same respect. To have betrayed the self-respect of one of his characters, could never be successfully charged to this master of drama. Idealism: through all the stark, gripping, throbbing realism, there overflows a spirit



and a passion that is idealistic, and makes of his works - living things. An idealism that leaves the thinking self quivering with a sense of guilt for its past failure, and from the tension of eagerness to respond to the rising tide of noble living that would lift it out of the paltry dust of its own pettiness and insincerity. Such are the outstanding characteristics of Galsworthy's philosophy and drama. Characteristics, these, that belong to the gods themselves. And their religious value? It is beyond measure. For they reveal with a delicacy that belongs only to the master soul, the abscess that spreads poison through all the human system, and in the same act speak that word that is for its healing.



CHAPTER THREE

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SELF   AND   SOCIETY



## CHAPTER THREE

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### SELF AND SOCIETY

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## CHAPTER THREE

### SELF AND SOCIETY

#### I

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Such was the query of the Galilean. Similarly we could ask today -- "What shall it profit a man if he gain the approval of his group and lose his self-respect?" Or conversely -- "What shall it profit a man if he maintain his standing in the group thinking that to do so is to preserve his personal integrity?"

The universe of persons which we call society is ego-centric. For the well-being of both the ego and society the integrity and self-respect of the ego must be maintained. To undermine, or to cause or permit to disintegrate, that sense of the integrity of the self which is basic to self-respect, is the greatest tragedy of the universe within our comprehension. For that self is the organizing centre by which the stuff of life is built into a meaningful whole, and because meaningful -- valuable. It is that which, if adequately developed, holds all things in right relationships. It preserves perspective and balance. Destroy or defeat that nucleus and the very stars fall from their places. The universe crumbles and falls upon us in chaos - a denial and a mockery. To preserve the integrity of that ego therefore, is of vital importance. And this is the prime function of



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ethics and religion. The nature of religion is "the urge to ultimate relationships". Its function as an institution is to minister to that urge by all means possible in such a way as to bring to pass the realization of that ultimate unity. Therefore anything that involves the one and the many, the self and the non-self, is of importance to religion.

Essential to this concern for the integrity of the self is the integrity of every self. That is, we cannot bend society to serve the needs of particular individuals for the evident reason that "society" is simply a community of selves, each as valuable as the other. And this fact must be kept in mind by every self of every other self. The point is that there is not only self and other-self, but every self is conscious of other-self. And because of that very other-consciousness, self-integrity cannot be maintained unless other selves are given due consideration. For it is in the nature of self that nothing once having been brought into consciousness can be ignored with impunity. Something must be done with everything within consciousness. It can be ignored or refused, but to do so is, to that extent, to violate one's integrity. The extent of that violation depends on the relative value and significance of that which is ignored and denied. And hence if we have set up as the supreme value, self and the integrity of that self, that value inheres in every self, and to ignore and to disregard whatever is judged by the conscious self to be of highest



value, is to violate to the greatest extent the integrity of self.

It is thus we shall see that self-integrity cannot be maintained on the grounds of a limited loyalty. Limited loyalties set up discriminations with regard to selves, as of relative value. Nor does self-integrity rest on group approval for the very reason just stated - that group approval is generally a matter of limited loyalty. The problem therefore is, if integrity is maintained by giving due consideration and place to every other individual self, how can it possibly be maintained in our modern society? With these considerations and issues in mind we shall move to a discussion of some of the more important of Galsworthy's plays.

## II

The first play to which we naturally turn therefore is JOY which bears the sub-title, "A play on the letter 'I'". In this play Galsworthy sets forth very realistically the point stated above. He presents it as it is so often seen worked out in family life. We live our own lives with little reference to the lives of others. Nothing much happens in the play. There is a matter of re-arranging a bed-room for the convenience of guests; a dispute regarding a tennis match; preparations for a dance; and a little love making by the young people. But the varying expressions of egoism are set forth in a manner interesting and real. Colonel Hope is a man "managed" by his wife but who resents the management very decidedly. It is preposterous to think



that he - a colonel - cannot think for himself. He has taken a thousand shares in a gold-mine because his wife said he must not, and when his wife begins to check up on his investment and declares that if it isn't safe "I simply won't allow Tom to take these shares", to preserve his self-respect he declares "I'll have two thousand of those shares Lever. To have my wife talk like that, I'm quite ashamed." He argues over nothing at all and becomes quite exasperated when his son-in-law insists the Colonel hit a tennis ball out, when the Colonel declares he "saw the chalk fly." Mrs. Hope's egoism as already suggested is the egoism of the managing woman. She likes to impose her judgment on others - especially her husband. Blunt, the Colonel's son-in-law, a young man of twenty-eight "possesses the egoism of omniscience". He could show the Colonel the exact place the ball lighted. He knew all about mining and delivers the indisputable decision that the Mexican mines are the best. The Portuguese are "awful rotters". The barometer is a "rotten old glass", (he has a "little ripper"). And how deucedly stupid for anyone to argue about it! After all he takes the impersonal view of it - until he has to move his clothes into another bedroom - and then it's a "deuce of a nuisance". Lever's egoism is that of a business man with very little ethic except to save his own hide and get out of a worthless gold-mine with as much of other men's money as he can persuade them to put into it. Of course he doesn't want the Colonel's money (but then he wants the Colonel's niece), but the money of anyone



else will do. Mrs. Gwyn's egoism is concerned with the securing of her own immediate happiness. Life must conform to her own wishes and desires. The needs of her adolescent daughter are sacrificed to the immediate realization of her own happiness. Joy is an impetuous, "cross-grained" girl. She refuses to go and be fitted for a dress. She expects her mother to utterly renounce her friend for herself and sulks because her mother is not willing to concede to her desires. She hates Lever for no other reason than that her mother loves him. Dick Merton is the traditional lover who believes his own love is a special variety. The only understanding soul in the whole thing is "Peachey", the old governess; sometimes too obvious, but for the most part natural enough. With her lies the key to the whole pathetic triviality of it all. Speaking with the Colonel in the last scene she says "...We're all as hollow as that tree! When it's ourselves it's always a special case." This is the ground on which each has excused his selfishness. And how clearly she sees our common weakness: "They (Mrs. Gwyn and Joy) must go their own ways, poor things! She can't put herself in the child's place, and the child can't put herself in Molly's".

How obvious is the betrayal, each of himself and the others. And how we see ourselves portrayed! We feel how utterly foolish they all have been. How ridiculous of the Colonel to think he had to buy two thousand shares just to preserve his self-respect. And of Mrs. Hope to domineer.



What did it matter where the ball went or where the finest gold-mines are found? How imbecilic to make a gold mine what it is not, to swindle unsuspecting simpletons, and then to disappear with a feeling of "How clever of me!" How childish of a mature woman to put her own desire above every other consideration. In seeking to save themselves and their self-respect they had lost their self-integrity. They had sold out to an appearance, a trifle, and the integrity of others was no concern to any except "Peachey". And in the attempt to save others she alone maintained what others sought.

There is another brief and more pathetic betrayal which Galsworthy gives us in THE FIRST AND THE LAST. Larry Durrant, a rather weak fellow, falls in with Wanda, a girl of the street. They fall in love and though unmarried are living together. A brute of a man out of Wanda's past turns up and in a struggle, Larry strangles him. He disposes of him and goes to see his brother Keith who is "within an ace of a judgeship". No one has seen the crime. An old man is arrested and tried. It looks as if he will hang. If Larry confesses, it is death for him, shame on his family, and failure to Keith. Keith insists he must not confess - it would ruin him. But Larry cannot go on with it. He writes a confession and enters a death pact with Wanda. Keith finds the lovers dead in each other's arms, and also the note. He destroys it. He must save his own life. The old man? "Let him hang". Larry lost his life but ultimately



saved his self respect. Keith saved his life but violated that inner integrity which was worse than death. Are Larry's morals excused? Not at all. But rather Larry's morals--or lack of them--and his loyalty to an old tramp, than Keith's pharisaic righteousness and his "name" and "future". Larry at least is alive with humanity, perhaps disfigured, discolored, and distorted, but Keith is "a whitened sepulchre, full of dead men's bones."

LOYALTIES is among Galsworthy's finest works and provides a fine comparison when set in juxtaposition to JOY. Most of the characters are true to what they believe to be the best ideals of their group. Windsor is loyal as a host to his guests. Canyngge upholds the esprit de corps of the British Army officer. Berring stands to the codes of honor in his club. De Levis is moved by his nationality. Twisden gives up the case to be loyal to the honor of his profession. Ricardos is loyal to his daughter; the servants to Windsor; the police sergeant to his duty. Major Colford and Margaret Orme put friendship first. Dancey is the least loyal, yet seems to fall from the ideals of a gentleman only in a moment of anger, and personal animosity. In the end he is loyal to his wife--as he understands that loyalty. But finest and greatest of all is Mabel's loyalty to Dancey. It is the finest because most tried and abused, yet rising triumphant. The closing moments of the play bring poignantly to the light the issue discussed here throughout. Before Dancey shoots himself, he has written a note to Colford--"This is the only decent thing I can do. It's too damned



unfair to her. It's only another jump. A pistol keeps faith. Look after her Colford--my love to her and you." And Margaret Orme seeing the inadequacy of it all says, wildly, "Keeps faith! We've all done that. It's not enough." That's it. It's not enough. But why not? And what is? It is not enough because their loyalties, with perhaps a few exceptions, were too limited. There was an egotism at the heart of their loyalties that thwarted their good intentions and defeated their high ideals. De Levis thought he could defend his national pride by ignoring and thwarting the wider loyalty he owed to humans of whatever race. Dancey thought he could preserve his own respect without consideration of his young wife left alone to face the shame and disgrace of deeds not her own. And doubly vicious was his betrayal of himself and of her in the light of her unselfish devotion and noble unswerving loyalty.

### III

But while it is most often true that we are our own most dangerous enemies, and that we betray ourselves more often than others betray us, yet it is true that there are some whom society robs, and having robbed them, beats them and leaves them by the roadside half dead and ready to die. Such pathetic cases are graphically set forth for us by Galsworthy in such plays as JUSTICE, THE FUGITIVE, AND THE PIGEON.

JUSTICE provides us with the picture of young Falder, who in a moment of pressure yields to the temptation of



forgery. He is a weak, nervous fellow, but chivalrous. And his forgery is caused by sympathy for a woman who, with her three children, has suffered much at the hands of her husband. Falder is tried for felony and convicted. His sentence is three years penal servitude. Doubtless he was alone responsible for his own betrayal in the first instance but when one has violated his own sense of right, and his conscience is raw and bruised, it is hardly the occasion for stretching that body on the rack. But that is the way society in it's law and penal institutions does. To see Falder in his cell beating on the door with closed fists is to see the tragedy of a soul betrayed when he would have made good. Time passes and he is paroled, but like a ghost his record haunts him, hounds him, and at last drives him to the fatal plunge that breaks his neck. He was robbed of his chance of rebuilding "the vision and the dream", by a pharisaic world whose hypocrisy is ten times more damnable than ever Falder's felony could be. And what did society do about the cause of it all--a drunken sot who nearly strangled his wife? By it's silence, declared him just!

In THE FUGITIVE, marriage for the Dedmonds had proven anything but happy. Clare has come to the end of her endurance and like a wild thing that has escaped it's confinement, finds her liberty as hideous as her captivity. For ever there is the driving fear of the hounds that follow: the bloodhounds of tradition. From covert to covert she flees, until at last she is brought to bay. And now it is



either the betrayal of the integrity for which she first broke covert and that she has expended every effort to preserve, for which she has run like a frantic doe--admirable in her desperation;--or--a leap in the dark and the preservation of loyalty to her inner self. She chooses and dark--and integrity. But why did she have to make the choice? Because a fool world mistook the institution of marriage for the integrity of the soul, or cared nothing for it.

THE PIGEON is among Galsworthy's best plays, and in it we see three very human and hence very interesting people. Of particular interest from our present viewpoint are Mrs. Megan and Ferrand. They are souls that never tame. But society takes no notice of individuality. It calls eternally and only for conformity. And that conformity is an arbitrary standard set up by those in power. The rich and the poor are separate species. What Ferrand says is true; "If I were rich should I not be very original...? And that young girl, would she not be 'that charming lady', 'veree chic, you know'...What are we now? Dark beasts despised by all." Mrs. Megan is disciplined for loving the things that among the rich are part of "culture". Ferrand is "corrected" for loving that freedom that the elect have bought with gold. But then it would never do to encourage the natural tendencies to freedom in the common man. That would endanger the freedom that is the luxury of the "favoured of the gods". No! Suppress, curtail, correct, and by any other means violate the integrity of the masses, but at all costs preserve and garnish the sepulchres of the self-betrayed, self-suffocated. The breath of pure air and



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the elusive ray of sunlight that lingers in the shabby garb of the souls yet free, are ill-omens in a world where reigns the lie that self-respect and the soul's integrity are slavery to tradition.

And how impotent is law! It is but the buttressing of the strongholds of those who climb to power. It is primarily for the protection of property, not for the safeguarding of the integrity of men's souls. "hat do we, as a society, with those "...in whom something moves--like that flame Monsieur, that cannot keep still--we others--we are not many--that must have motion in our lives, do not let them make us prisoners with their theories, because we are not like them--it is life itself they would enclose?"? Again from the mouth of Ferrand comes wisdom--"For the greater part of mankind to see anything--is fatal!" The insinuation is that they haven't the courage to live with sincerity. Having substituted a lie for the truth, they dare not face reality but forever deny the right of souls to preserve their own integrity. And what does it all mean? It means simply that in the face of reality we are most of us cowards. We will betray that reality for an appearance; and having betrayed it within ourselves we are not content until we have betrayed all others, and they with us grovel in the decaying remains of respectability like worms within a corpse.

Nor can we overlook the case of Stephen More in this connection. THE MOB is not as good a work as most of Galsworthy's dramas from the standpoint of art, but yet for



our purpose sets forth a good example of the treatment of individuals by society, at the opposite extreme of the cases just cited. Stephen More is a young M.P., son-in-law to the Secretary of War, and himself Under-Secretary. England declares war, and More delivers a speech opposing the country's action. He resigns his position and tours the country speaking against the war. The treatment he receives is what is to be expected from a mob under such circumstances. His wife stands by the country and her father and brothers, and More is left alone. He finally dies at the hands of the mob. And so society treats all who do not conform. It matters not whether they fall below it and become denizens of the streets, or whether they rise above it and embrace in their sympathies the whole round world. Their treatment is the same. Society as an institution is like a great dumb ox--big and brutal but with little brain and less intelligence. It cares only for one thing most of the time, (as do most individuals for that matter), and that is to be confirmed, or to confirm itself, in that which it does. Let a voice be raised in protest or a life attempted without regard for it, and woe be to that one! It is "Socrates drinking the hemlock, and Jesus on the rood."<sup>1</sup>

#### IV

We have been considering those individuals who are the victims of this inter-relatedness. But it is not always so. There are times when the order is reversed and the group is victimized by the individual. John Builder in the FAMILY

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1 "Each in His Own Tongue" by William Herbert Carruth



MAN is such an instance. He is a man of the old school who believes in liberty--to boss his own household irrespective of their rights as individuals. And there is no place where the need for respect of individual personality and its integrity is more vital than in the family. Here persons are thrown together by the fate of birth and perhaps with no other interest in common than their biological relationship. But John Builder is above all conscious that he is the head of a house. He basks in the light of his supposed authority, and to preserve that dignity he ruins the life of his family, his home, and himself. His opinion is very tersely expressed: "...I tell you--a very little more of this liberty--licence I call it--and there isn't a man who'll be able to call himself head of a family". And in the same scene: "...If the law is going to enter private houses and abrogate domestic authority, where the hell shall we be? The maudlin sentimentality in these days is absolutely rotting this country. A man can't be master in his own house, can't require his wife to fulfil her duties, can't attempt to control the conduct of his daughters, without coming up against it and incurring odium. A man can't control his employees; he can't put his foot down on rebellion anywhere, without a lot of humanitarians and licence-lovers howling at him!" His younger daughter Maude, before leaving home, very aptly and frankly reveals to him his own transparency: "You don't really love anybody but yourself, father. What's good for you has to be good for everybody. I've often heard you talk about independence, but it's a limited company and you've got all the shares." His brother Ralph



attempts to make the same thing clear to him: "You profess the principles of liberty, but you practise the principles of government." And Ralph's good sense is refreshing as the morning breeze: "Let's boss our own natures before we boss those of other people".

This play is not a satire on family life in general. Ralph's home is very evidently an ideal home. And Guy Herringhame insists all homes are not penal institutions, and all men are not "heads of families".

The other outstanding example of this type of violation of the sacredness of the self-other-self relation is THE FOREST. This is a play on the law of the jungle, applied in big business. Bastaple is the jungle beast. The world of men at large is his prey. Thus Tregay in the first few lines asks, "Well! Why have I been asked into the lion's den?" Bastaple's one ambition is--wealth. He builds a camouflage of charities and behind a supposed interest in uprooting slave traffic in the Congo, that he may save his fortune--and perchance increase it--he is responsible for the loss of the lives of most of the members of the expedition, and increases his fortune by two hundred and five thousand pounds, on a lie of his own invention, and at the cost of thousands of innocent investors. The mystery is, how can a man maintain any kind of self-respect at all and so fiendishly disregard and plunder the rights of his fellow men? How can a man delude himself into thinking that on the thwarted lives of his fellows he himself can



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mount the heights of self-realization, when the self to be realized he has denied and betrayed at the outset.

V

But without doubt the greatest of all Galsworthy's plays is STRIFE. This play is an excellent example of the use of opposition in drama. Capital is pitched against Labor. Anthony is pitched against Roberts; the workmen against the Board members. The women of the two camps balance each other. There is the old die-hard school and young people's human sympathies that see human misery before private profit. There are groups against groups, individuals against individuals, and individuals against themselves and their varying loyalties. There is Rous who is in conflict with his own loyalties; whether to do the wish of his girl-friend or be loyal to Roberts. There are the men whose loyalties to their families and their immediate needs win out over their loyalty to their leader. Roberts in his stand for principle is yet conscious that he is killing his own wife. STRIFE is true to our own day as it was true to the day in which it was written. The attitude of Capital is explained by Anthony: "It has been said that masters and men are equal! Cant!" And Roberts is of the same fighting dogged spirit as Anthony. Both are almost magnificent in their doggedness--their determination. Roberts is bound to win or die fighting. Anthony says to him in the Board meeting--"There can only be one master, Roberts." Roberts retorts, "Then be Gad, it'll be us." The strife continues. The men are wavering



and Roberts is making his last stand. He is fighting desperately in a last effort to carry his men on to victory: "Surrender's the work of cowards and traitors....You've felt the pinch o't in your bellies. You've forgotten what that fight has been.....the fight o' the country's body and blood against a blood-sucker. The fight of those that spend themselves with every blow they strike and every breath they draw, against a thing that fattens on them, and grows and grows by the law of merciful nature. That thing is Capital! A thing that buys the sweat o' men's brows, and the tortures o' their brains at its own price."

But Anthony is equally sincere and intense. He also is making his last stand before a Board that is about to vote him down for compromise with the men: "I have had to do with "men" for fifty years; I've always stood up to them; I have never been beaten yet. I have fought the men of this company four times, and four times I have beaten them..... It has been said that master and men are equal! Cant! There can only be one master in a house! Where two men meet the better man will rule. It has been said that capital and labor have the same interests. Cant..! Their interests are as wide asunder as the poles.....There is only one way of treating "men"--with the iron hand..... This middle-class sentiment, or socialism, or whatever it may be, is rotten. Masters are masters and men are men!"

They are both fighting for something beyond their own time, and the particular local situation. Roberts pleads-- "...'tis for all those that come after throughout all time.



Oh! men--for the love o' them, don't roll up another stone upon their heads..." Anthony's plea bears the same ring: "I am thinking fo the future of this country...threatened with the black waters of confusion, threatened with mob government, threatened with what I cannot see. If by any conduct of mine I help to bring this on us, I shall be ashamed to look my fellows in the face."

And so they fight on when workers and Board members are long since ready to come to terms. Nor do they ever give in. The flood at last rolls over them, while they stand in their tracks--grim, gaunt, dying, never yielding but ever defeated, betraying and betrayed. There is no more tragic scene in life than the last scene. The men have deserted Roberts. The Board has deserted Anthony. They face each other:

Roberts: But ye have not signed them terms! They can't make terms without their chairman! Ye would never sign them terms.

Anthony looks at him without speaking.

Roberts: Don't tell me ye have! For the love o' God! (with passionate appeal) I reckoned on ye!

Harness: (Holding out the directors' copy of the terms) The Board has signed! (Roberts looks dully at the signatures--dashes the paper from him, and covers up his eyes.)

Roberts: Then you're no longer Chairman of this Company! (Breaking into half-mad laughter) Ah! ha-ah, ha, ha! They've thrown ye over--thrown over their Chairman: Ah-ha-ha! (With sudden dreadful calm) So--they've done us both down Mr. Anthony?..... (Anthony rises with an effort. He turns to Roberts who looks at him. They stand several seconds, gazing at each other fixedly; Anthony lifts his hand, as though to salute, but lets it fall. The expression of Roberts' face changes from hostility to wonder. They bend their heads in token of respect. Anthony turns and slowly walks towards the curtained door.)



And Harness significantly adds, "A woman dead; and the two best men both broken."

And what had it all to do with self-respect, and the integrity of that inner soul that cannot breathe, that cannot live, in a world where self thwarts other-self, but forever languishes?

There are three other plays which particularly deal with this problem of group strife. They are THE SKIN GAME, FOUNDATIONS, and THE ELDEST SON. The SKIN GAME represents the old traditional aristocracy in conflict with the more modern big business autocrat. The aristocracy is one that is not without a rich culture, and while insisting on the preservation of the caste system, nevertheless is tender toward it's life-long tenants. Hillcrist sells some of his estate, including some cottages, on the condition that the tenants will not be disturbed. He accepts Hornblower's word and never dreams a signature necessary. The big business autocracy is "without tradition", and "believes in nothing but money and push". Mrs. Jackman, the tenant, is horrified to think that Hornblower "...don't even know our name". His own words reveal him best as he is in himself, and as representative of his class. Hillcrist has been objecting to Hornblower's ejection of the Jackmans. Hornblower retorts, "Have a sense of proportion man. My works supply thousands of people, and my heart's in them. What's more, they make my fortune. I've got ambitions--I'm a serious man. Suppose I were to consider this and that, and every little potty objection, where should I get to?"



Nowhere! .....I've got the guts, and I've got the money, and I don't sit still on it. I'm going ahead because I believe in meself. I've no use for sentiment and that sort of thing. Forty of your Jackmans aren't worth me little finger.....(To Mrs. Hillcrist) Ye're an obstruction--the like of you--ye're in my path. And any one in my path doesn't stay there long; or, if he does, he stays there on my terms." And the SKIN GAME is on. The sub-title of the play, a quotation from the play, is an apt summary of it all--"Who touches pitch shall be defiled".

While this play deals with the problem of caste conflict it sets forth that conflict in representative individuals. Because two men dispute over a piece of land called the Centry they bring on each other's names the muck and mire that is unavoidable for those who play in the mud. Hillcrist is false to his higher self and "gentility". The married life of the young Hornblowers is ruined. And especially is this tragic when we remember that Chloe, though she was "a woman who went with men to get them their divorce", has sincerely reformed, being genuinely in love with Charles. But Charles is not big enough to rise above her past when it is discovered. The beautiful friendship between Jill and Rolf is ended. Pleading always for the right to live and to be happy they are embittered by the quarrels of their families. How refreshing they are in their own right--as frank and thrilling as the blue of a cloudless sky. They see so vividly the bestial part of it all, and seeing would prefer to retain the splendor and the charm.



Thus Jill talks with her father, "I do like being friends. I want to enjoy things, Dodo, and you can't do that when everybody's on the hate." And when the opening bout is ended, as Rolf leaves, Jill calls softly--"Enemy!" Rolf, turning, responds--"Yes enemy?" And Jill answers--"Before the battle--let's shake hands." But the bitterness spreads and in the third act the following ensues:

Rolf: Suppose we joined--couldn't we stop it?  
Jill: I don't feel like joining.  
Rolf: We did shake hands.  
Jill: One can't fight and not grow bitter.  
Rolf: I don't feel that.  
Jill: Wait; you'll feel it soon enough.

And as her "beloved enemy" leaves she "stands with her hands clenched and her lips quivering." And when it was all over the only thing that was preserved was the Centry--a two thousand acre lot. It's scenic value perhaps beyond measure, but surely not worth the betrayal of a dozen human souls. It is only when the heat of conflict is over and the irreparable damage is done that Hillcrist regains the true perspective. The epithet of his opponent strikes him to the very core--"Ye hypocrite". And as Hillcrist surveys the wreckage and looks into his own soul he asks, "What is it that gets loose when you begin a fight and makes you what you think you were not? What blinding evil! Begin as you may it ends in this--skin game!---When we began this fight we had clean hands--are they clean now? What's gentility worth if it can't stand fire?" What is anything worth if we can't stand unashamed and unembarrassed before the tribunal of our own souls?



FOUNDATIONS is one of Galsworthy's most interesting plays, and in a sense amusing. He uses as a sub-title "An extravagant play in three acts", and then adds the first three lines of the old nursery rhyme,

"Hey didle didle  
The cat and the fiddle  
The cow jumped over the moon."

In so far as the actual story goes it is impossible, and the real interest lies in the views of the various characters. Lord William and Lady Dromondy live in luxurious circumstances in Park Lane. Lord William has been to the war and made the astounding discovery that the common people are "thoro' good chaps at bottom". There is the spirit of revolution abroad and the particular sore spot is "sweat work". Mrs. Lemmy is the typical sweated worker and is the real interest in the play. Her particular line is "trousers". She tells the "press"--"I put in button 'oles, I stretches the flies, I lines the crutch, I put on the bindin'.....I sews on the buttons. I presses the seams--tuppence three farthin's the pair.....In a gude day I gets thru four pairs, but they'm gettin' palguey 'ard for my old fengers.....I finds me own cotton, uppence three farthin's, and other expension is a penny three farthin's." A very "gude week" is "seven shellin's". The press writes--"A monumental figure on whose labor is built the mighty edifice of our industrialism." The play sets forth not so much the force of either class or individual conflict, but the thing that all through his work Galsworthy embodies as the cure for much of human misery, namely, human kindness.



Lord William is a soft-hearted, "muddle-headed" geniality who thinks a dinner in sympathy with the sweat work problem, and a few speeches to some specimens of the malady whom he has invited to the dinner will help toward better understanding between the groups, and in some manner solve the situation and relieve the tension. His gospel is the gospel of kindness. He tells the press "I think it would be a deuced good thing if everybody were a bit more kind." And he believes "one oughtn't to be kind for any motive--that's self-interest, but just because one feels it, don't you know?"

Bob Lemmy is a young plumber who drinks to "the British Revolution! 'Ere's to the conflygrytion in the sky!" He is rather a dispassionate fellow who sees things fairly well for one of his kind. He seems to want revolution as much for the fun of it as anything. He sees the wrongs of his world--his own mother was one of those wrongs--but he does not fool himself into believing a revolution will fix things up. He says, "We're going to have a triupherat in this country--Liberty, Equlity, Fraternity: an' if yer arsk me they won't be in power six months before they've cut each others throats. But I don't care--I want to see the blood flow. (Dispassionately)--I don't care 'oose blood it is. I want to see it flow." We have already quoted Bob Lemmy's views on the new religion of Kindness . But he believes 2 kindness is not enough: "Blood and kindness! spill the blood o' them that aren't kind--an' there ye are!" He is



of the same view as a friend of the "press" who wanted to "strangle the last king with the hamstrings of the last priest."

But both Lord William and Bob Lemmy miss the mark. The answer lies with Mrs. Lemmy because she is the lowest of all in the caste system but bears no ill to any. The "foundations" of the whole of society are insecure. The only foundation that will stand shall be built neither by the patronage of the rich nor by violent revolution, but by the diffusion of prosperity and happiness through all classes, by the spirit of understanding and mutual cooperation which is made possible only by the practice of love. And love is the law of the affinity of selves. It is that attitude which holds as supreme the integrity of the universe of selves, and by which alone can there be any truly self respecting world.

THE ELDEST SON is a play setting forth the caste feeling as it comes into contact with morality. Sir William Cheshire is an English Gentleman who believes in morality for the poor. For the poor it is the only way to decency and self-respect. Dunning the young under-keeper simply must marry Rose Taylor or lose his job. But that "morality" must never be applied in "Society". In that select company it would spell loss of prestige, ruin! Sir William's own son must not give the same consideration to his mother's maid as Dunning was expected to give to Rose. The situation is finally resolved by the maid's father, Studdenham. His wisdom is far beyond the wisdom of the "favored"; "She may ha' slipped her good name but she'll keep her proper pride."



The reader of Galsworthy's plays cannot help but be impressed with the ever-present problem of family relations and sex. It is so evident that a word regarding it cannot be omitted in any comment on his work. The family is basic in our social structure as it stands today and any change in this institution is bound to have wide and far-reaching effect. It is intimately related to the ethics of sex, and it's influence in general morality is more than considerable. A rapid survey of Galsworthy's plays will reveal to us the complexity of the whole problem. In SILVER BOX there are Mr. and Mrs. Jones and their family and the difficulty between Jones and his wife. In JOY there is far from harmony between the Colonel and Mrs. Hope; the relation between Mrs. Gwyn and Lever, involving Joy is annoying. In STRIFE there is Roberts who will not have any children, because when a child is born poor it's a "toss up from breath to breath whether it ever draws another, and when he comes to be old it's the workhouse or the grave". In THE ELDEST SON there are the problems of the sex relation outside of the marriage state, and the complications resulting from such relations. The occasion of all the trouble in JUSTICE is a woman, who with her three children, flees from a brutal husband. In THE PIGEON Mrs. Megan represents the tragedy of a broken home. Clare and George in the FUGITIVE are perhaps the most pathetic of all. George while realizing love has died persists in requiring wifely duties from



Clare. Clare with the soul of an artist, after suffering it for four years rebels and leaves. Demanding our sympathy no less is Strangway in A BIT O' LOVE. His wife made a false marriage and asks leave of Strangway without divorce to return to another man. With a heart breaking love, and without bitterness he releases her as a few hours previously he had released a bird from its cage. In FOUNDATIONS Lemmy is opposed to marriage because he has no desire "ter myke no food for payder." In THE SKIN GAME Hillcrist deals in dirt because his wife's soul was long since dead and who, when all the damage had been done admitted she could not see where-in they had erred. The FAMILY MAN is a commentary on the tragedy of thwarted lives. The soul of Mrs. Builder has been denied expression so long, that she appears as a flower that long has grown in the dark--without strength, color, or perfume. Faith Bly in WINDOWS suffocates her child to "save it from living", and Geoffrey and Joan March can hardly be said to be an ideal couple. The whole plot of OLD ENGLISH is built around the illegitimate offspring of Heythorp. Major Morecombe, in THE SHOW, will not have children because of his occasional attacks of insanity, but does not tell his wife the reason. The result is, each goes his own way to new relations while they continue to live under the same roof. Love without marriage looms large in THE FIRST AND THE LAST. The neglect of "Herself" to wear her wedding ring is the occasion of HALL-MARKED, ("A satiric trifle"). And in both ESCAPE and DEFEAT are cases of women of the street. The only really refreshing bit of family



life in Galsworthy's plays is by implication rather than by direct contact. Ralph Builder's family was evidently a happy one wherein each member was free to live his own life and yet where family unity was maintained and morality was high and wholesome.

Of course the first question to occur is, has Galsworthy been fair to marriage and the family in representing such a preponderance of evidence that would tend to discredit them as social institutions, when we know that there are so many more families that are so worth-while? This is not a thesis on ethics and is not the place for a discussion of the ethics of sex and marriage, nor of the social and economic factors involved in them. But two things can be said in fairness to both Galsworthy and these institutions. The first is that morality does not inhere in a marriage ceremony, certificate, or ring. There is as much immorality within the marriage tie as without it. And when it is so it is much more hideous and heinous, for it is beneath the cloak of approval. And marriage is better dissolved than to become the breeding place of such immorality. To maintain the old primitive concept and attitude that even though love is dead, the appearance must be maintained and men and women must face a life that dwarfs their souls and often embitters their spirits, is neither socially nor religiously desirable. Sex is basically of our animal nature, and men as animals are not monogamous. It is only as personality emerges and lifts sex into its own sphere that it can become something else. To think by



the institution of marriage to do the work of personality is to fool ourselves into accepting a lie for the truth because it sets up an appearance of morality and social security, but in reality may prove to be void of either.

The second thing to be said is that, as there is a plea for sympathy and mutual cooperation in all relationships, so there is a plea for the revision of our ethics relating to sex and marriage; for a system of ethics that shall not do violence to the spirits of men and women who have erred in their selection of a partner. At the same time there is his plea for respect for personality and concern for personal integrity which runs like a golden thread throughout all his work, which if heeded would make every home a heaven and every marriage a benediction. If Galsworthy has presented a preponderance of evidence of unsatisfactory home life we must not think that he considered the family to be a complete failure and an institution that has been outgrown. He does not present it as something comparable to the outgrown shell of the Chambered Nautilus to be abandoned by "life's unresting sea". He is rather to be understood as pleading for the reconstruction of the ethics governing it, and for the infusion of a moral and spiritual quality to enrich it to make the family what it ought to be, and indeed so often is, a temple wherein persons kneel to one another in reverent recognition of their unique status, and in pledge of their mutual loyalty to each other's integrity.



Providing a light touch that affords relief and contrast to the picture we have presented is the very entertaining episode play, ESCAPE. Matt Denant has escaped from prison under cover of a fog. After his escape we see him first in the bedroom of a woman who feeds him chocolate, permits him to shave, provides him with some brandy, and aids his escape in her husband's fishing clothes, and thoroughly enjoys the episode. While fishing Matt meets up with a retired judge who guesses Matt's identity but chooses to "wink the other eye", and remarks that he feels quite human. After stealing the car from the shopkeeper, Matt meets a man and his wife on a hill. The woman takes delight in the thrill afforded by the possibility of assisting Matt get away by riding through the town with him. Later as a farmer and a constable take up the chase through the fields, a little girl who has asked for Matt's autograph says, "Oh! I do hope he gets off!" Miss Dora is delightful in her plotting to help the hunted man and even Miss Grace tells a lie for him when the crisis comes. The parson in the church is willing to endanger his own influence and compromise his own conscience to protect Matt, though Matt does not permit it. The whole point of the play is summed up in two lines. When Matt is talking to Miss Dora, she asks if it wasn't rather mad to escape. He replies "I don't think so. It's shown me how decent people can be!" That there is kindness and good-will in the world is a truth that must never be overlooked. It stands as a saving grace



amidst so much that is of the jungle rather than of society. The other line referred to is Matt's closing line. He has given himself up to the constable to save the parson from an awkward and embarrassing situation, and he makes the comment: "It's one's decent self one can't escape!" There are people who at cost to themselves preserve inner integrity and self-respect, both of themselves and of others. We do not feel particularly disappointed that Matt's attempt to escape has failed. He can face prison with far less danger of shipwreck than many a "free" man can face his freedom. A man who is free from the hounds of law yet who must forever vainly flee from the hounds of his own best self betrayed, is an object for pity far more than a man behind prison bars who is at ease in the court of his own conscience.



CHAPTER FOUR

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AN EVALUATION OF RELIGION IN THE DRAMA



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CHAPTER FOUR  
AN EVALUATION OF RELIGION IN DRAMA

I

In our introduction we set up as our purpose the consideration of Galsworthy's plays in the light of a definition of a religious play given by Fred Eastman, as one which has a religious effect upon the audience. A religious effect was defined as one which at various times had varying results within certain limits. At one time the reaction will be one of exaltation or spirit, and at another time one of humbling and making ashamed. Sometimes the reaction regarded as religious will be a deepened sense of fellowship with God and at other times an increased sense of guilt. But always it seems that the reaction most characteristically religious is that in which there is an increased understanding of the spiritual struggles of men and an enrichment of one's sympathies with men those struggles. But that sympathy must never be thought of in terms of pity. The human spirit, except when seriously distorted, resents pity. Pity looks down upon men as upon those in an experience from which we ourselves have been preserved. Sympathy is that which we feel when, no matter how varied the material and external conditions of men, we know we are on common ground and face common foes in these spiritual struggles. We are all alive to the spirits yearnings for a satisfying life. It is not the satisfaction that acts as a drug and reduces active striving and sensitivity, but the satisfaction that stimulates and invigorates; the satisfaction that comes from a sufficient measure of successful functioning. And yet it is not so much in our successes and satisfactions



that we feel most that community of being, but rather in the experiences of thwarted striving, or in the struggle with that which threatens to thwart.

Essential to our evaluations in this respect is a consideration of the philosophy of the dramatist. This is necessary because the effect is essentially related to beginnings. Knowledge of the stone dropped into the water is necessary to an understanding of the ripple that caresses the edge of the pool. Thus in our first chapter we discussed the philosophy of Galsworthy. We discovered that sincerity was the prime element. Correlative with sincerity was inevitability and respect for the integrity of the characters as such. Characters were allowed to live their own lives within the structure of the play, and the essential result was inevitability. Parallel with and essential to sincerity was sympathy. Galsworthy, we have seen, was always striking at the stupidity and inhumanity of men in their inter-relations, and pleading for sympathy. But more significant in this connection was the fact that he was so true to his characters that our sympathies were distributed; never in equal proportion but always so that we could not with all our hearts ever condemn any. We have a realism that is arresting; a realism in the personal realm. It is a realism of values and relationships; a realism of feelings and ideals. And none the less real and remarkable there is always an inherent idealism. It is not

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1. Idealism, not in philosophic sense such as Platonic Idealism, but as religious or moral Ideal.



an idealism that is taught or argued, but it is one that rises of itself out of the clash of contending elements and the facts of experience; facts and experiences which are used by some as the ground for the argument directed toward the denial of idealism. After all is said and done, Christ on the cross is his own strongest plea and his own assertion. The supreme tragedy is idealism's supreme plea.

Those elements which we have observed in Galsworthy are without question elements that lie at the heart of religion. Sincerity is as fundamental to religion as light is to the eye. True it is that religion has been captioned as "an opiate to the people", but such an utterance was spoken out of an ignorance of the real nature of religion. It was spoken of something that bore the name of religion, but had lost it's spirit. Rather than an opiate, religion is that which calls for truth. It demands the harmonizing of all expressions of life with the ultimate realities. It requires the setting in order of life's relationships. It permits of no hypocrisy and no pretension. It allows no world of make-believe or fancy as a substitute for reality. It discountenances camouflage and is impatient with that which neglects or side-steps the real issues of human struggle, be it material, social, or spiritual. Especially is this true of Christianity. Rather than being a drug, it aims to bring abundant life. <sup>2</sup> Jesus declared his purpose before Pilate, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness to the



truth."<sup>3</sup> The supreme law of love to God and our fellow-man is the law by which we shall set things in their right relationships.<sup>4</sup> Was any man more severe than Jesus in the denunciation of hypocrisy and insincerity? - "Woe unto you Scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full from extortion and excess."<sup>5</sup> Of those who live behind camouflage Jesus said, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones."<sup>6</sup> Religion draws the soul into the inner sanctuary of God's presence and there lays it bare for the searching of its hidden ways and tracks down the last vestige of insincerity, unfairness and pretense, as a blood-hound follows the fleeing criminal. And from that presence there is no escape, as Francis Thompson has so majestically indicated in "The Hound of Heaven". And in that presence there can be nought but Justice to all, loyalty to truth, and profound reverence for every man.

Nor is the element of sympathy less significant in religion. It is not pity, as we have already noticed, but sympathy such as we see in Jesus as he turns to the woman who has been left alone in his company, and says to her, "Neither do I condemn thee".<sup>7</sup> It is that which knows the secret dream and the inarticulate ideal. It looks beyond

<sup>3</sup> John 9:37

<sup>4</sup> Luke 10:27

<sup>5</sup> Matthew 23:25

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 23:27

<sup>7</sup> John 8:1-11



the wreckage of life and cherishes the essential person of sincere intention: belated and belayed intention perhaps, but dear to the heart of a Redeemer, a treasure of infinite worth. It is this sympathy which can make the loser of life's struggles feel that we do not pity, but without reserve hold him as on an equality, and disregarding blemish and lack, by our faith establish in him a new confidence. This does not involve the excusing of his sin, but rebuilds his morale and brings to him a new surge of spiritual vitality and creative dynamic. And it is this sympathy that we feel when we have met Galsworthy's characters. We envision the people they might have been or could be. In imagination we strive to aid them to be true to those noble qualities we see so clearly they possess. True we are conscious of those things for which we would readily and heartily reprove them, but what is that but the reflection of our faith in them? Thus Galsworthy does on the stage what religion strives to do in life. The same qualities are found in his philosophy of drama as are essential to true religion. They breathe the same atmosphere.

These characteristics were further illustrated in our last chapter as they were found in the plays of Galsworthy, and particularly as they constituted a tacit plea for respect for the integrity of individual personality. We observed the havoc wrought in life as people strove to assert themselves without respect to the sanctity of one another's integrity. The sacred rights of individual



personality are essentially the basis of loyalty to persons, irrespective of class or temperament and without regard to the condition to which the movement of time has brought them. We must learn that we have no right to misrepresent or to violate the basic self-respect and integrity of another. This result Galsworthy achieves by so realistically presenting his characters and the situations which they create, and in which they move, that we cannot avoid a genuine appreciation of each character in his own right. It is the establishment of this appreciation for every man in his own particular and peculiar set of circumstances, and with his own peculiar temperament and background, that achieves the result of establishing in us a feeling of respect for him that is not less than religious.

But beyond the reactions of feeling that we experience, when all Galsworthy's plays have been reviewed, there is left in the mind one great question, which centres in the problem already discussed - that of relationships. The mind is left grasping for that ultimate relationship that allows the individual his right to live his own life and yet preserves the integrity of the group. The existence of society very evidently necessitates certain restrictions of individual liberty. Of necessity it functions through institutions, and it is the nature of institutions to crystalize, depersonalize, and devitalize. And in this process they change from being organs for the expression of a people's life to the yardsticks that measure the conform-



ity of persons, even though that conformity be the conformity of death. How can there be freedom and interdependence at the same time? Or with the interdependence necessary in society is there an inevitable denial of freedom and hence an eternal violation of those very factors so essential to the sanity of life?

Galsworthy very severely scores the inadequacy of social institutions. The law courts he sets forth as utterly incapable of administering justice, at least to certain types of people, because it cannot take into consideration in any adequate way the psychic factors. Such examples are found in JUSTICE, ESCAPE, and WINDOWS. The failure of reform institutions is reflected in such plays as THE PIGEON, and WINDOWS. Nor is Galsworthy any kinder to the church as one of those institutions. So far as the references in his plays are concerned, religion is for the most part represented as a decadent, impractical thing. Only twice is it represented as being warmly human. Strangway in A BIT O' LOVE is a young St. Francis touched by the infirmities of all and keenly sensitive in his own bitter experience. The other instance is the parson in ESCAPE. Matt Denant has taken refuge in the church and the parson wants to help him, and does, as far as he can. But even he is handicapped by what he sees to be his responsibility to the law and his parishioners. But beyond this the representatives of the church are failures. The minister in the PIGEON is an impractical theorist, who makes his case worse by making a



pretense at being human. The chaplain in JUSTICE is cold and unsympathetic. In THE ELDEST SON, the preacher is a prude, remote from the human strife that is going on around him. The Dean in THE MOB is equally oblivious to the ultimate and real issues. That this representation is largely justified cannot be denied, especially of the day in which Galsworthy wrote. That it is universally true could not be successfully claimed, and that Galsworthy would maintain it to be so could hardly be argued. That he has high regard for Christ there is at least a suggestion by direct reference. In ESCAPE Matt and the parson are discussing what a parson should do with an escaped convict, and Matt asks "Wonder what Christ would have done!" The answer of the parson may or may not be an insight into Galsworthy's own attitude: "That...is the hardest question in the world. Nobody ever knows... The more you read those writings the more you realise that he was incalculable. You see--He was a genius! It makes it hard for us who try to follow Him." But that Galsworthy has gone beyond this and in effect answered this question and also the difficulty he points to, can hardly fail to impress itself upon our minds. Nevertheless the church as an institution he does not excuse or exclude from his indictment of institutional inefficiency and inadequacy, and that in this he is justified in a large measure.

What our Author would do with these institutions, or put in their place, is hard to say except to emphasize again his doctrine of kindness, and the respect of men for



each other in their rights as individuals. But that this can be realised through social institutions is nowhere suggested by Galsworthy except as it is implied in his dealing with the problem of the family as discussed in the preceding pages. But neither does religion have any other solution. The Christian religion does hold the faith that there will come a day when the law of love shall reign and be operative even in the social institutions, if indeed there be need of them in such a day. But it makes no other answer than the practice of kindness.

## II

A word is here in place with regard to the general use of the dramatic technique in relation to religion. In Protestant Christianity we have been confusing religion with sermonising and argument. In effect we have been saying that true religion is correct apologetic. The phrase "filling a pulpit" is still a common expression among Protestant people. And even this would not be quite so bad if there were more men who really "filled" their pulpits. But neither apologetic nor moralising is religion, nor is it religion's own essential technique. Nor is religion even a combination of these two. There is room for, and at times a necessity for both apologetic and ethic in religion, but we must look elsewhere for its own essential technique.

There are two symbols of religion that are significant from two different view-points, but they both illustrate the



religious mode. One is the statue of the American Indian astride his pony as it stands on a mountain bluff, with his face and arms uplifted to the blue sky. The other is the picture of the man of Galilee, thorn-crowned and crucified. The one is the upsurging of the spirit of man in communion with the spirit of God. The other is the suffering love of a Father-God. But neither is in the general sense either an apologetic or a moralization. They both are dramatizations of a subjective, spiritual, reality of experience. When Jesus sought to give to men the idea of the Kingdom of God and lead men into its experience and the realization of it, he set it forth in terms of action. It was the merchant seeking goodly pearls.<sup>8</sup> It was a man going into a far country and leaving his servants to administer his estate.<sup>9</sup> It was like the man selling his possessions to buy the treasure he had found and hid in a field.<sup>10</sup> His rebuke is "Ye call me Lord, Lord, but do not the things that I command you."<sup>11</sup> The criterion of Divine judgment is action versus inaction.<sup>12</sup> The tendency of life itself is toward active expression. When men cannot grasp the abstraction and the apologetic they can always be reached through the language of action, for action is their "vernacular".

This principle is of particular importance to religion because it is true that men learn by imagination and imitation. That is why Christianity has so often been

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8. Mtt.13:45-46; 9 Mtt. 25:14-30. 10 Mtt. 13:44

11 Luke 6:46 12 Mtt. 25:31-46



identified with creeds, beliefs, and sermons. The pulpit has taken the place of the altar. The cross must take the place of both, as the dramatization of Divine Love. The pulpit has a place it is true, but it can only justify that place as it dramatizes by means of the imagination of the hearers the quality of kindness in operation in their own immediate contacts. By dramatization of the spiritual nature of God, Jesus accomplished the supreme achievement of all truth and being. The ultimate value of being is not rational comprehension of reality; that is merely one stage or aspect of the process of becoming. The ultimate value is truth in action. And truth in action is reality. The seat of action can be no other than personality, for action must ultimately be traced to volition which is one of personality's peculiar realizations.

If therefore the church wishes to make clear to men the ultimate meaning of life; if it wishes to bring the morals of life poignantly to the light of day for the common understanding, let it implement its morals and its apologetic in the dramatic mode. The most convincing apologetic of Christianity is Christ in contact with human need; symbolically it is Christ on the cross.

Is not this thing we have been talking about achieved by Galsworthy? Without moralizing he has brought vividly to consciousness the moral element inherent in life itself. He has made it vibrant and alive. He has made it starkly real. But most of all he has revealed it to be ultimately



inescapable.

But this he has not achieved by the positive procedure. That is, he has not set forward the situations in which the ultimate relationship that must govern all life is in effective operation. On the contrary he has taken the means of presenting life as he finds it in those situations where kindness is conspicuous by its scarcity, and by impressing upon us the lack has convinced us of its necessity. This is a masterful achievement for it is few who by dwelling on the sores of society can themselves avoid cynicism and satire, and attain to a true idealism. Greater yet is the attainment of one who, in so doing, can carry others with him in such a way as to convince them that it is the inevitable conclusion of the matter.

This brings to the surface the whole problem of contrast. It has been said that we teach by contrast, and we do. And our author does this very definitely, especially in the broad lines of his plays as we have just pointed out. He teaches kindness by making evident the tragic results of the lack of kindness. Groups are set against groups and individuals against each other. Interest is set against interest. Yet there is something very real and valuable about the way in which he establishes the meaning of that contrast within the plays. He never sets up a single man as a hero in his own right and at the expense of the rest of the characters. There is no place or occasion for hero-worship in his plays. Characters are seldom



introduced as scaffolding upon the summit of which stands a super-man. Each character exists in his own right and on his own merit. He stands or falls by the trueness of his own inner self. Every man is a hero by virtue of his own nobility, or a failure on the grounds of his own weakness. External circumstances, while determining very much the "fate" of an individual, are seen to be of secondary importance. Somehow we feel that a man losing his life is of little concern - we are so occupied with the concern that he remain true to his ideal. And this is how it should be. Life is not truly represented by extremes. Life lies in nobility in the mundane, beauty in the commonplace, and courage in the inevitable.

How this technique is to be implemented in the church today is another question, but the writer believes that to adequately fulfil its task and discharge its responsibility the church must turn very definitely to the development of the dramatic mode. To fail to do so is to miss the greatest implement known to men for the conveyance of truth and the persuasion of the will. The argument of ethics may convince the intellect but only an emotionally stimulating dramatization, whether by direct action or by imagination, can move the will. This is true at least for the greater part of humanity.

The philosophy, the dramas, the technique, and the effects wrought in the audiences of Galsworthy, have thus been seen to be in harmony with the spirit and nature of



true religion and especially of Christianity. That Galsworthy himself set out to create religious effects or that he would relish such an interpretation as has here been made is not claimed. And that many within the church would feel betrayed by such comments as have been here made is not disclaimed. What is suggested is simply that as we review the field of religion and the works of Galsworthy, striving meantime to come to a deeper appreciation of both, we feel that there is a certain unity of spirit, content, purpose, and effect.

That the church will move intelligently and deliberately to the implementing of its message in the dramatic mode so natural to it, is the sincere hope of the writer. To demonstrate that it can be done has been, in part at least, the purpose of these pages.



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